

Won't Anybody Listen

A film review by Christopher Null - Copyright © 2001 filmcritic.com

Dov Kelemer's look into an aspiring rock band in the L.A. music scene is as stomach turning as a movie can get without showing any blood and guts.

Instead, the blood and guts can be found in the eyes of the six members of the-band-you've-never-heard-of NC-17, a sort-of harmonized post-grunge combo with a violinist and a gravelly-voiced lead singer. Having moved from rural Michigan to Los Angeles based on the promise of a record deal, brothers Frank and Vince Rogala and Robin Canada (then known as Exude) thought everything was going their way. Said record deal evaporated, though, and the band found itself more unknown than ever. *Ten years later*, they're still at it, now with five members (including the violin), a new name, and nothing to show for a decade of work.

Documentary film doesn't get more desperate than this. As Kelemer put in an introductory note to me, "it is similar to *Hoop Dreams*... and it is *Leaving Las Vegas* depressing.... Hopefully... you won't shoot yourself after watching it." I didn't, but I wanted to. As a writer, I know rejection, for sure. But the career of musician is undoubtedly the worst when it comes to an utter lack of recognition for your work, ranking below independent filmmaker and aspiring actor.

The members of NC-17 face everything from estranged wives and uncaring A&R reps to greedy concert promoters and IRS audits. And Kelemer's got it all on film. It's a truly unforgettable movie, light-hearted at times, but devastating on the whole. While the film has its flaws (some scenes tend to repeat material too much), *Won't Anybody Listen* is a picture that any fan of documentary will adore. And if you think you know what went into that \$16 compact disc, just you wait....

RATING: ★★★★★

Director: Dov Kelemer

Producer: Dov Kelemer

Screenwriter:

Stars: Frank Rogala, Vince Rogala, Robin Canada, Chuck Hohn, Ron Perron, Robert Aviles, Art Aviles, Roxanne Aviles, Hugo Burnham, C. Tucker Cheadle, Bruce Duff, Lonnn Friend, Danny Goodwin, Rich Heaton, Jeff Jampol, Tom Kidd, Laura Lossing, Chris Martin, Doug Priestap, Nancy Rogala, Rose Rogala, Billy Rose, Barry Squire, Katherine Turman, Jim Washburn, Joan Worley, Jon Barbee

MPAA Rating: NR

Year of Release: 2001

Go to the official web site for *Won't Anybody Listen*:
www.anybodylisten.com



Rock of Ages